

OXFORD  
POEMS  
H. W.  
GARROD



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OXFORD POEMS



# OXFORD POEMS

BY

H. W. GARROD

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## NOTE

OF the poems in this book several have already appeared in the *Oxford Magazine*, one in the *Saturday Review*. They are here reprinted by permission of the Editors of those journals. The poem upon page 85 is reprinted from the author's edition of *Manilius*. For leave to reprint it he has to thank the Delegates of the Clarendon Press.



OXFORD POEMS



## Dedicatory

IF of the mansions manifold

That, still by sorrow quickenèd,  
Imagination builds to hold  
Her unforgotten holy dead :

If one there be not all of dreams

Devised upon a base of tears,  
Some house of gold whence subtle beams  
Strike on the sea of human years :

Whence sometimes mystic voices come

And whither words of ours may pass—  
From that not all-imagined home,  
Not all-forgetful of what was,

## Dedicatory

Look down and listen for a space  
    To voices unfamiliar grown,  
To music groping after grace  
    On hollow strings of broken tone.

But if, in utter darkness dense,  
    And lost to prayer and poesy,  
Beyond the summer and the sense  
    Of all the living earth, you lie,—

I nonetheless in songs that die  
    Some dying hope of life would nurse,  
And, singing, for a while put by  
    The meaning of the universe.



The Naval Pageant:  
September, 1902

Now fall the flags, now fade the flowers,  
No more the cannon shake the sea,  
The purple of the waning hours  
Dies over all our pageantry :

And one by one the ships of war  
Like ghosts across the darkness steam,  
And build against the uncertain shore  
The grey procession of a dream ;

And in my fancy one by one,  
In spectral pageant wan and white,  
The ghosts of empires dead and gone  
Lift faded faces to the night,

The Naval Pageant : September, 1902

And darkly challenge all our pride

With all the darkness vainly veils—

The dead upon their decks that died,

The battered prows, the shattered sails.

\* \* \* \* \*

O fear not, follow even so,

And where the phantom empires wait

Gallantly, ships of England, go,

Superb and strong, fulfilling fate.

*σκιᾶς ὄναρ;*

IF man from empty shadows born

A shadow passes whence he came,

I know not : but I know each morn

The blood within me saith " I am " :

And something laughs and leaps and longs,

And dashes at the hill of life,

And dies for honour's fancied wrongs

And strives for very love of strife ;

And out of dull disaster gains

The strength that hopeless causes give,

And out of death's subduing pains

Cries " Dying and behold we live."

## Quo Tua Te Fortuna

THE bugles blare, the great drums beat,  
The noise of mighty nations calls :  
Now with a mighty courage meet  
The great world waiting at your walls.

No more remember love, nor think  
Of sunshine in the pleasant hills :  
A thousand cities slowly sink  
Beneath a thousand hopeless ills.

Thy spirit touched with loftier love,  
The kind clean love that swiftly kills,  
Dying shall home return and move  
Well pleased among the pleasant hills.

ὦ πέπον, εἰ μὲν γὰρ . . .

LAD, if with honour you and I  
Might leave the battle to the strong,  
And live together and never die,  
Unthinking and for ever young :

Then neither I, so feebly formed  
For fighting with immortal gods,  
Had ever with vain courage stormed  
The heavenly unapproached abodes :

Nor ever voice of mine had spurred  
You to the all unequal strife,  
Where still the soul that bears the sword  
Surrenders to the sword its life.

ὦ πέπον, εἰ μὲν γὰρ . . .

But now, since still with truceless eyes  
The bitter ghosts of troubled thought  
Wage on our dearest privacies  
Unceasing war, unseen, unsought—

Why, better then with strengthless arm  
To speed an unavailing spear  
Than wait upon a hidden harm  
And die before a formless fear.

τετράγωνος ἄνευ ψόγου

Do thou, while every other tie  
    Forgoes perchance its ancient power,  
Still bear beneath an alien sky  
    The image of the steadfast Tower.

How often out of all the noise  
    Of riot in the idle night  
The empty souls of shouting boys  
    Have sobered in the solemn light

Flashed from the sudden moon and cast  
    White on the weathered walls : and Thought  
Touched the unthinking, and the Past  
    Shone out of shadow all about :

τετράγωνος ἄνευ ψόγου

And the wan immemorial spell

Rebuked the coloured transient hour,  
And strong and imperturbable

The great walls of the steadfast Tower

Shed on the half-unconscious heart

The image of their steadfastness,  
With strength beyond the strength of art,  
Secure superb and sorrowless.

\* \* \* \* \*

Strong with the strength of welded walls

Forever guard, through sun and shower,  
And bear wherever Empire calls,

The image of the steadfast Tower :

Stand, as it stands, steadfast, true-set,

Serene, four-square, unblameable,  
A prop of Empire, nor forget

Faith and the friends that wish thee well.



## Dead Man's Walk

A DEAD man walks beneath that wall,  
And often dreaming ears have heard  
Beneath his soft ashamed footfall  
The loose-flung gravel lightly stirred.

To honour and to friends untrue,  
A sorrowful and shameful ghost,  
There every night he dies anew—  
The man that stood not to his post.

In darkness nursing obscure pain  
He comes to look on where he died,  
And in the darkness sees again  
The shame that darkness cannot hide.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Dead Man's Walk

You, when you come, come in the light,  
To all we trusted wholly true,  
And bring your honour clean and bright  
Within the walls that welcome you.

## Discipulo Discedenti

Go, and look not back again:

Sweet are friends; truth never dies;

On river and hill, on field and plain

Still the summer colour lies;

Still the hands you took are true,

Still the eyes with honour shine,

Still the voices of the few

Whisper wisdom half divine.

Go, while nothing grim or grey

Mars the golden memories,

Go while all that bids you stay

Hints not yet of all that dies.

## Discipulo Discedenti

Look not backward: one I knew  
That lingering late with love unwise  
Saw the fields without their dew  
And the friends with altered eyes:

And on his spirit winter fell  
And age upon the dream of youth,  
And rancour poisoned all the well  
Of Friendship's once untroubled truth.

But you—with courage leave afar  
The unspoiled splendour of your dream,  
Or e'er the soulless things that are  
Convict the things that only seem.

“Auld Lang Syne” on the Last  
Night of Term

THE boyish voices fade and fail,  
The grey quadrangles sleep again,  
And in the pious moonlight pale  
The grave Tower frowns on things profane.

But still in thoughts that banish sleep  
The shouting and the songs remain,  
The tumult of the hearts that keep  
Ever in honour the old refrain,

And vow forever unforgot  
To hold the loves of long ago  
And save from time in days remote  
The glamour of youth, the gleam, the glow.

## “Auld Lang Syne”

O happy any, of all that sing,  
O happy in the days to be,  
If out of all the winters bring  
And all he never dreamed to see,

He lives not ever to behold  
False to its oath the hand he took,  
Perjured the splendid speech, and cold  
The kindled eyes, the heavenly look.

O, in the evil and lonely day,  
O happy still if still he can  
A hand on Honour's altar lay  
That was not false to any man.

## A "Bump Supper"

So ends your week : six bumps in all :

Why, take your pleasure and be done :

Shake with your shouting every wall,

And stir with stamping every stone.

Those stones have stood six hundred years,

And looked perchance on ruder joys :

The feet of careless Cavaliers

Beat on them once as brave a noise.

To trumpet's blare or tramp of feet,

Be sure, they will not fall to-night,

Nor the weak cymbals that you beat

Loosen their immemorial might.

## A "Bump Supper"

They stand forever ; and their eyes  
Through all the ages never sleep,  
But ever over joy that dies  
A vain and bitter vigil keep.



## A Lost Race

AND so you want the skies to fall,  
Or care not if they do or not,  
And sit and mope and mourn :—and all  
Because you stroked a losing boat.

Lad, every mother's son that lives  
Rows ever in a losing race,  
Where not a single boat arrives  
And all the world "goes down a place" :

And each man spends his leaking heart  
In tugging at a baffled oar,  
And curses still his "rotten start,"  
And hears the shouting on the shore

## A Lost Race

As something idle and remote

Where one thing only still is real,  
The men that sit within the boat  
And faint and fail, and fear and feel.

And when I think how poor a hope  
Has each of ever getting through,  
I almost could sit down and mope  
And curse the luck of things, like you.

## A Don's Point of View

NOT wholly dead to all they feel

    This blood that for a moment starts  
And tugs the tattered bands that seal  
    The well-heads of senescent hearts.

As some bright language lightly won  
    And lightly lost in southern lands  
Anon beneath a sudden sun  
    Obeys some golden day's demands,

And comes with music of the south  
    And fragments of diviner phrase  
To touch with borrowed grace a mouth  
    Made common with the common days :

## A Don's Point of View

So seems their language half my own,  
And native unto other skies,  
And startles with refulgent tone  
Ears fed on sober harmonies.

O often come and startle so,  
Voices with hope and honour bright,  
The senses that have ceased to glow  
With any save a borrowed light.

## To One who Desired a Fellowship

WHY, lad, you know not what you seek  
Nor what a faded world is ours :  
Spent minds alone and bodies weak  
Come here to rest their broken powers.

Once—we were once as other men :  
We moved the world, we felt it shake :  
Grandly we gave to joy and pain  
Hearts that were great enough to break.

Once words and actions made our blood  
Leap like the quick blood of the strong :  
We spoke as men that seek man's good,  
We struck as men that slay a wrong.

## To One who Desired a Fellowship

To-day some god with voice of gold,  
Or angel with a flaming sword,  
Might come and, speaking, leave us cold,  
Or, doing something, find us bored.

## To an Indian Civilian

So take a hand whose highest skill  
Is but to drive an idle quill,  
And yours to nobler uses lay  
And put to trades that better pay.

Over the desert drive your roads,  
Draw down the stream, tame the great floods,  
Open to never seen daylight  
The profound forest's unsearched night.

Lay out an empire, build your fame,  
Plant on the verge of earth your name,  
And unto us be still the same.

## To an Indian Civilian

I, in the shadow sheltering  
The weakness books and thinking bring,  
Almost with envy greet afar  
The splendour of an alien war :

And feel for half a winter day  
Half of my weakness fall away,  
And from an unused courage speak  
Words of farewell not wholly weak :

And out of thoughts that live not long  
I set to fragments of a song  
The leave-takings that leave us strong.



## Ein Gleiches

FIVE years will bring you back again,  
And wonder touch you when you come  
To see a thousand things remain  
Unaltered in their ancient home.

Swiftly the coloured hours go by,  
Ev'n now I seem to see you come  
And with foreshortened ceremony  
Impetuous break into my room,

And bring the eyes that laughed of old  
Still laughing, and the old good looks,  
And health that marvels to behold  
A shadow bending over books.

## In Mem.

C. C. S-M.

LADS with life still left in you,  
Hearts that still beat strong and true,  
A little while to-day be sad  
With sober grief that maketh glad :

The lad that only yesterday  
Led you all in all your play,  
The splendid lad that rowed for you,  
The heart and nerve of all your crew,

The lad that never felt a fear—  
Dead by a treacherous Dervish spear  
To England offers up to-day  
The gift her greatest servants pay.

## West Africa

SHIPS that travel where *you* go—  
So they say who best should know—  
Out of every hundred men  
Take but twenty back again.

No man's fortune there is made,  
There you will not find Free Trade ;  
Merciless in merchandise  
Death alone there sells and buys.

These alone are no man's lands ;  
Nowhere any pillar stands :  
Here and there a dead man's bones  
Make an empire's boundary stones.

## West Africa

Where a man falls, there he lies  
Rotting under rotten skies,  
And a pensive Government  
Wonders where on earth he went.

Most of those that hither come  
Dared not longer stay at home :  
Here disaster and disgrace  
Find their quiet hiding place.

Leave your luck then, and be gone :  
Whatsoever you have done,  
Here, where living men are few,  
Here, man, here's the place for you

## Admonition

FORBEAR with eyes that fail in faith  
To scan a sealed and sacred scroll,  
Nor vex with harsh accusing breath  
These subtle silences of soul.

Amid the wreck of happy dreams,  
O never doubt, whate'er betide,  
The soul is greater than it seems  
By all it struggles hard to hide.

O one day with a rush of tears  
This schooled reserve shall fall away,  
And over all the perjured years  
The light of open honour play ;

## Admonition

And all that shame was loth to show  
    Shall come in tears not shyly shed  
And fall upon the heart as though  
    It had not needed to be said.

## The Quest

IN silences of forest night,  
In coverts of inviolate vales,  
On hills of unascended height,  
By seas that never sailor sails,

The Angel of the Earth's Romance  
Sits with expectant kindled eyes,  
She hears the invader's foot advance  
Upon her obscure Paradise ;

And what the quest, she marvels much,  
That unto these forsaken ways  
Withdraws him out of tone and touch  
Of modern men in modern days :

## The Quest

She knows not ; neither doth *he* know,  
    He only knows he cannot rest :  
Only his bosom bids him go,  
    Nor dares he slight that high behest :

The Muse, that knoweth all that is,  
    And somewhat unto those betrays  
Who haunt her ancient privacies,  
    “ He seeketh his own soul,” she says.



## Swinburne

April 14, 1909.

(“It was the express wish of Mr. Swinburne not to have the Burial Service read over his grave. Friends will gather round in silence and throw flowers and then disperse.”—*Mr. Watts Dunton to the Rector of Bonchurch.*)

So on a poet's tomb your wreath

With unelaborate ritual lay,

And waste not idly pious breath

Above the unregarding clay :

And call not, standing at his grave

And prizing all he never prized,

To mock the soul they could not save

Gods that the living man despised.

## The Vigil

(“The world is always waiting for its poet.”  
*Emerson.*)

STRANGE vigil of eyelids wan and worn,  
What thing is this we wait to see?  
Shall Christ of Cain begotten be,  
Out of our baseness beauty born?

And yet not idle utterly  
This watch the anxious ages keep:  
If ever once we close in sleep  
Our waiting eyelids—lo we die!

μόνος σὺν τῷ μόνῳ

WITH drooping sails our pinnacle glides  
From the stern waters to the still,  
And through the quiet bosom rides  
Of seaways shadowed by the hill :

So from the rougher world of things  
By mystic tidal motion brought  
The spirit drops, with drooping wings,  
Into the quiet world of thought ;

There lies it lost to sense and sound,  
With some more mighty Movement one :  
Only the hills are ranged around  
And lonely look on the Alone.

## Strife

I ASK not from the inward strife  
A dozing spirit tamely free :  
To wrestle with the Life of Life  
Is life, or life enough for me.

But from the strife of tongues, O Lord,  
That rages round thy sanctuary,  
From speech that slayeth like a sword  
Protect the soul that seeketh Thee.

## Love of Living

THAT day when all that men call Faith  
Fails, and in death you see but death,  
And all that held you falls away—  
No man can help you in that day.

And yet some secret of the blood  
Still hangs on life and calls it good ;  
But ah ! if once it fall away  
God cannot help you in that day.

## Dirge

FLOWERS of the springtime fling  
Where he is laid :  
He could not wait the spring,  
He is dead :

Ah! in whose heart the flowers  
Wither of love and faith,  
Sweeter than summer hours  
The day of death.

All birds that blithest sing  
With liquid throat  
Are sad to him in spring  
Whose heart sings not.

## Dirge

Sad, sad am I for thee,  
    Brother and gentle friend :  
Sweet summer suns to me  
    Kind comfort send.

## A Closed Page

A MODERN cheap and tattered book,  
A name, a phrase, that caught my eye,  
I turned the page, I closed the leaves,  
And smiling laid the volume by :

Smiling, and thought, " A week will bring  
The friend I love from other lands,  
And he shall see it and shall laugh  
And clap for glee his boyish hands."

Still closed it lies, the page turned down,  
Let be the dust that round it lies :  
The dust of him I loved is laid  
Beyond the sight of human eyes.



## A Closed Page

His page of life the fingers cold  
Of Death, that scholar wise and deep,  
Have folded over and have sealed  
Securely in the final sleep.

## Memorial Verses

TEARS? and I too, lad, have wept through the  
night,

Wept for a life no love can now redeem,  
Wept for a face lost ever to my sight,  
Pure brow and sweet eyes soft as a dream.

Tears? It is daylight: sunshine bathes the  
earth:

Come to the sunshine, we do ill to weep,  
We, we of all men; we that knew his worth,  
We that knew his sorrow, mourn for his  
sleep?

Unfulfilled purposes, wasted in air?

Fame foreshortened, greatness unachieved?  
Mute ere the world could receive and share  
All that he dreamed of, all he believed?

## Memorial Verses

Nay, with such foolishness vex not his ghost ;  
Sunshine and fancies and fields and flowers—  
These were the things that he loved the most,  
These he abides with the livelong hours.

Music he loved, he had fashioned songs :  
Half his sweet singing abideth yet :  
High over earth and its sordid wrongs  
Starward still were his deep eyes set.

All this, but somewhere a warp in the will,  
Whims and wild fancies crossing quiet sleep,  
Strange dark cravings prayer could never still,  
Dim longings soaring still from deep to deep.

Now no longer the strain of how to live  
Vexes the tired heart, clouds the weary brow,  
No need longer to cry and to strive,  
No fear of ruin or failure now.

## Memorial Verses

Leave him to lie with the lilies at his head,  
    Leave we our poet, for he hearkeneth to-day  
That fuller music here but imaginëd  
    Which is the Truth of things, the Life, the  
        Way.

## One Thing

O LITTLE profits where he lies  
The glory of a cloudless brow,  
Little the light of liquid eyes,  
The floating hair, the lips that glow.

Small profit now the white hands have,  
The hands that subtle music beat :  
The shrouded feet within their grave  
Small profit find of being fleet.

One thing alone of all that was  
Shall shine in darkness brightly still,  
One thing of all the things that pass  
Abide in death inviolable :

## One Thing

And vainly though it beat upon  
The prison where the dead are laid,  
Still shines wherever once it shone  
The light of honour unbetrayed.

## Early Dead

IN whatsoever time we die,  
In whatsoever grave we lie,  
Both season sweet and cemetery :  
Sleep on, sweet soul, the dreamless sleep ;

I might have thought to find thy grave  
Where Oxford towers their basements lave  
In the wide Isis' quiet wave ;  
Sleep on, sweet soul, the dreamless sleep ;

(Our Isis no more sadly flows  
Than when to pretty pebble-throws  
Her light wave rounded, flashed and rose :  
Sleep on, sweet soul, the dreamless sleep ;)

## Early Dead

Or where the Imperial river bears  
Imperial costly far-fetched wares  
And pondereth imperial cares :  
Sleep on, sweet soul, the dreamless sleep ;

Or where with many melodies  
The bright light laugh of Celtic seas  
Leaps to the salt unsaddened breeze :  
Sleep on, sweet soul, the dreamless sleep ;

Or she that saw thine agony  
Might well have laid her garlands by,  
Paris, and sighed to see thee die :  
Sleep on, sweet soul, thy dreamless sleep.

Dark Dijon, in thy sombre shade  
Guard lovingly my holy dead :  
Lie soft the comely boyish head :  
Sleep on, sweet soul, the dreamless sleep.



## Sonnet

I SAID "In silence only shall the soul,  
In silence and in solitude, attain  
Peace, and in solemn isolation strain  
Upward and onward to the far-seen goal :  
The self alone sufficeth to the strife,  
Alone the spirit shall support her pain  
And reap a lonely rapture and regain  
The something strangely lost from human life."  
Sweetly my dream of isolation died,  
Died in the night of darkness : deep and sweet  
A living voice aroused me, and I cried  
" O living Voice, upward to God with thee !"  
O Voice divine, with human pity replete,  
Thou, being dead, still speakest unto me.

## Catullus: CI

OVER the mighty world's highway,  
City by city, sea by sea,  
Brother, thy brother comes to pay  
Pitiful offerings unto thee.

I only ask to grace thy bier  
With gifts that only give farewell,  
To tell to ears that cannot hear  
The things that it is vain to tell,

And, idly communing with dust,  
To know thy presence still denied,  
And ever mourn forever lost  
A soul that never should have died.

Catullus : CI

Yet think not wholly vain to-day

    This fashion that our fathers gave  
That hither brings me, here to lay  
    Some gift of sorrow on thy grave.

Take, brother, gifts a brother's tears  
    Bedewed with sorrow as they fell,  
And "Greeting" to the end of years,  
    And to the end of years "Farewell."

## Catullus: XCVI

FRIEND, if the mute and shrouded dead  
Are touched at all by tears,  
By love long fled and friendship sped  
And the unreturning years,

O then, to her that early died,  
O doubt not, bridegroom, to thy bride  
Thy love is sweet and sweeteneth  
The very bitterness of death.

## In Vain

IN vain my sorrow seeks to hold  
A forehead forehead unto Time,  
In vain do fingers stiff and cold  
Essay to ring a braver rhyme ;

In vain the perfect skies are given,  
In vain the summers beckon me,—  
Though God make windows in the heaven,  
I cannot, or I will not, see.

Still ever unconsoled regret  
Turns to the unreturning years  
Fond eyes for ever wan and wet  
From founts of never-failing tears.

## For the Last Time

COME, be beside me once again ;

There sit ; take hands ; nor speak nor move ;  
It is the last time ; all is vain ;

We part, for we are tired of love ;

Tired, very tired, and fain to seal

In some inviolable sleep

The weight those weary eyelids feel

Whose only office is to weep ;

Tired, very tired, tired to the death,

As one that long with doubts distraught

Resigns at length the fight of faith

And all the battle of his thought,—

## For the Last Time

Some poor unhappy thoughtful youth,—  
And loses all his touch with all  
That sweetens life, and lives to Truth  
Not as the friend but as the thrall ;  
And, vexed with thinking, early dies,  
And with the near approach of death  
Catches through doubtful dying eyes  
Strange glimpses of his former faith ;  
And murmurs half-forgotten prayers  
And fragments of a creed abjured,  
And midmost of his pious cares  
Unhappy dies and unassured.

\* \* \* \* \*

Come, be beside me once again,  
No other loss can leave the heart,  
Like loss of faith, so numbed with pain,  
So wan, so nothing. So we part.

## For the Last Time

We have been deeply, fiercely proved

In power, in passion, and in pain :

We who so deeply, fiercely loved

What matters it we loved in vain ?



## Winter

SNOW-HEADED God, O never may the Spring  
Young insolent and not to be put by  
Melt with his suns thy wise austerity :  
Of cold-grown hearts be thou forever King.  
The summer flowers—ask them not back again,  
But in some limbo of defeated pain  
Broken about their stems leave them to lie,  
Where in its unobservèd cemetery  
Sleeps all my love and that frustrated fire  
Of dim and ignorant half-divine desire.

## Mein Kind, Wir Waren Kinder

DEAR child, when we were children  
Content with children's toys,  
We had more than children's wisdom  
In the ways of girls with boys ;

We married and gave in marriage  
Our men and our women-dolls,  
Rehearsing then with puppets  
What now is a drama of souls ;

We wore them thin with pleasure  
And white with secret pain,  
And married them and broke them  
And mended them again :

Mein Kind, Wir Waren Kinder

And vainly tried to fancy

Some patched and plastered doll

As pretty and bewitching

As when it once was whole ;

Just as to-day we marry

And play our different parts

And love and hate and end by

Breaking our silly hearts :

And then we patch and plaster

With bottle and brush and glue

Hearts that once old and broken

Nothing can make look new.

Would God we still were children,

Still pleased with children's toys,

Without the bitter wisdom

Of grown-up girls and boys.

*χρόνος καθάρει πάντα γηράσκων ὄμῳ*

LOVE, that once with glowing eyes  
Dared the world to do its will,  
Deeper-thoughted and more wise  
Worketh his heart-wonders still :

Chastened by the rod of days,  
By the fire of time approved,  
Chaunteth now no more the lays  
Light, that told how once we loved :

But a somewhat sadder strain  
Chaunts, but not, as once, in vain,  
Blesses upon bended knees  
Not the passion but the peace.

*Ἔρως ἀνίκαιτος*

SWEET LOVE, thou art not Beauty's slave,  
Thou servest nought Time's ravage mars,  
Thy face is set beyond the grave,  
Thine eyes toward the eternal stars.

Thy force and function shall endure  
When all that called thee into birth  
Is dust and ashes and obscure  
Within the all-obscuring earth.

## “Greater Love hath None”

HE that loveth to the end  
And that dieth for a friend  
Greater love hath none than this.  
He that—sooner death than yield—  
Falleth on the battlefield  
Faithful to a nation's cause—  
Greater love hath none than this.  
Yet from censure or applause  
Hidden, nobler dieth he  
Who for faith or lack of faith  
Wrestles with the living death  
In the heart's Gethsemane—  
Greater love hath none than this.

## Invitation

COME then: still the spring is new :

Cumnor keeps its cowslips still :

Still the copse on Powder Hill

Flames a floor of living blue :

And the wan anemone

Faints before the azure fire,

As a poet's eyelids tire

In the world's refulgency.

Look, and leave it all, and keep

Still within your bosom bright

The unquenched fire, the living light

Unsullied, while the summers sleep.

## Epilogue to a Reflective Poem

YET not where sickly students sit  
    And con by lamps the lettered page,  
And early die, or reach at best  
    A useless and a sceptic age:

But where the soldier falls in fight,  
    But where the vessel sinks at sea,  
Where any honest deed is done  
    We solve our doubts of Truth and Thee.



## On Reading the Biography of an Eminent Person

As one that to the passing hour  
Lived wholly, and in wanton youth  
On foibles lavished god-like power  
Created for the ends of Truth :

That ever laughing went and came,  
The freeman of a frolic sense,  
And on his lips an epigram,  
And in his heart sweet insolence :

The world a dilettante saw,  
And shrugged its shoulders, worldly-wise:  
“ A scoffer,” said Religious Awe,  
And turned the whites of pious eyes :

## On Reading

So moved he in the world, so seemed  
    To those that knew him least and best,  
And all he doubted, all he dreamed,  
    All he aspired to, unconfessed.

\*           \*           \*           \*           \*

Late, when the laughing life was lost,  
    Late, when the breathing clay was cold,  
We saw a spirit tempest-tost,  
    And shaken with a woe untold ;

That through the length of bitter years  
    Had battled with a broken will,  
And borne beyond the aid of tears  
    An unjust doom, unconquered still.

## Enough

ENOUGH of cagéd courage  
And dull and passionless pain,  
Soul, and enough of silence,  
Now I am wholly fain,

Grimly no more foregoing  
The crying and the strife,  
To batter till I bleed on  
The iron bars of life.

## Ideals

EVER the highest, scorning the second best,  
Labour and travail, hating the hour of rest,  
Faith in the Perfect, and the will to win it—  
Bright is the dawn of battle, charge and begin it!  
Strong is the arm of youth amid the strife,  
Great is the heart of youth—to conquer life.

Strong thro' the noontide, in the burning heat,  
We have borne all things—only not defeat,  
Foughten and fallen, only not inglorious,  
Failed, and in failing proved victorious,  
Found Life a foeman worthy of our sword,  
Held our ground before him, by the help of the  
Lord.

## Ideals

Evening is on us, round us are dying men,  
Round us the dead that will never fight again,  
False friends have failed us and are basely fled :  
Life is not conquered, and our strength is dead :  
Stand firm to fail then : hark ! the battle-cry :  
Own thyself beaten, lie down and die.

## The Wisdom of Heracles\*

COME now, come hither and be wise in time.  
Knowest thou the burden of the life of man?  
How should'st thou know it? Therefore learn  
of me

We must all die : Death's debtors are we all :  
The day and hour knows no man, but he dies  
The fool of never-coming morrows. Dark  
Are all the processes of doom : it comes  
Neither with observation nor by art  
Forecast to any. Therefore, wise in time,  
Drink and be merry. Count to-day as thine,  
And all things else permit to the world's whim.  
Be thy religion Woman : sweet is Love :

\* Euripides, *Alcestis*, 779-802.

## The Wisdom of Heracles .

There is no kinder goddess : worship Love.

And let the world go by.

  If this be wisdom,

If this be wisdom, and methinks it is,

Obey it and be done with sorrow, drink

Crowning thy hair with flowers, and conquer

Fate.

Full soon the pulse o' the wine within the cup

Shall smooth a sullen care-contracted brow.

Men are we, and a man asks Life : and Life

Dwells not with sour and solemn looks : with

them

Dwells death, not life. So have I learnt the

world.

## An Incident

ONCE more the ancient greatness woke  
And flung him grandly to his feet,  
And in our bosoms ere he spoke  
Our hearts condemned us as they beat.

Nothing we heard of all he said,  
But only gazing seemed to see  
A glory all about his head  
Shine through the clouds of calumny:

And joy and sorrow, love and ire,  
Breathed all around and filled the place,  
And all his visage shook out fire  
And shone, as shines an angel's face.



## Engonasin

Who set in heaven that fainting fire?

Who bowed thee with a pain unknown,  
And bade above thee sound the Lyre,  
Beneath thee float the Virgin Crown?

Who left thee nameless in the signs?

Who wreathed so nigh the Serpent's coil?  
Who made in heaven whatever shines  
So puissant, yet broke *thee* with toil?

The hand that fixed thy fate in fire,

And wrought to melancholy flame  
The load that bows, the knees that tire,  
The agony that knows no name:

## Engonasin

That master hard and merciless

Made even as thou art thy sons :

The strong knees in obscure distress

Sink slowly under him that runs.

Ah! not for them the Crown, the Lyre :

They see the Serpent's lifted head,

They feel his hot breath's stinging fire,

Their hands hold off a subtle dread.

The goal that lesser souls attain

Recedes before their nobler strife :

Their name none knoweth, nor their pain :

These are thy failures, Lord of Life!

## Este Duces

Too long too lightly man esteems  
The feathered omens of the air,  
Nor holds the golden flight of dreams  
That flash their glory and are not there.

Where fly the emblems of thy love,  
Goddess, how dull our eyes, how slow  
Our footsteps: and where lights thy dove  
Lo! in the forest a golden bough!

And whoso breaks that shining spray,  
Death lays for him her secrets bare,  
And shows through dark the eternal day  
And the world's conquerors waiting there.

## Par Levibus Ventis

ONE day, I doubt not, we shall meet :  
I know the spacious meeting-hall  
Where gather and go by, with feet  
Noiseless and restless, great and small.

O we shall meet, and once more see  
With gladness each the other's face :  
But ah! I know the fixed decree  
That runs in that unfeeling place !

Thrice there shall I in baffled faith  
Fond arms about his shoulders fling,  
His vainly-comprehended wraith  
Thrice fade from out the arms that cling :

As well a man might clasp the wind  
Or strive the stuff of dreams to hold,  
Still die before the frustrate mind  
The forms of all it loved of old.

## Wind and Rain

WINDS, here is work for many a day,  
And labour for you, mountain rains,  
To blow abroad and wash away  
The memory of a thousand pains.

Cut sharp across a careworn brow,  
And flog a dull and faded cheek,  
Whatever winds most bitter blow  
About this bitter northern peak;

And cleanse this body through and through  
And drown its senses utterly,  
Whatever rains torrential flow  
Along a sullen Scottish sky.

## Wind and Rain

In vain I ask of rain and wind  
High offices beyond their art,  
To blow its trouble from the mind  
And wash its misery from the heart.

To J. L. S.

IF little lives in aught I sing  
Of all that gave the music birth,  
Of summer and the flowery spring  
And rivers and the friendly earth :

To you at least these barren rhymes,  
Will speak of all they do not say,  
And bring from unforgotten times  
The things that cannot pass away :—

The Devon places and their breath,  
The open moor's untrammelled room,  
The gold gorse shot with silver heath,  
The peat-stream and the quiet coombe,

## To J. L. S.

The bridge that carried once the cars—  
Or so we deemed—of Celtic kings  
Pursuing unremembered wars  
And dreaming of immortal things ;

It may be as they went their way  
They paused to see the sunset stir  
With purple of the dying day  
The green and grey of Bellever :

Or, if those old unfeeling kings  
Passed all that glory coldly by,  
And in their proud imaginings  
Went to do battle and to die ;—

Their brows at least the moorland wind  
Washed ; and their blood divinely beat ;  
And all that never touched the mind  
Gave lightness to their faring feet ;



To J. L. S.

And on they fared alert, alive,  
With quickened sense unspoiled by thought,  
With all that art can never give,  
With all that books have never bought.

I, dreaming in the dreaming hill,  
I, singing to the singing stream,  
Woo vainly all they felt, and still  
Miss—or I cannot hold—the gleam :

And out of all I seek to sing  
Fades wholly all I ill can spare  
The breath and brightness of the spring,  
The splendour of the spacious air.

“ Mes Chers Amis . . . ”

*(From A. de Musset.)*

FRIENDS of mine, when I come to die  
Plant a willow where I lie.  
I love to watch its leaves that weep,  
I love the pallor that they keep.  
Soft and light will fall its shade  
Over the earth where I am laid.

## Sic Itur

So fare we forth beyond the day  
To where the unseen things invite  
Brave feet that falter in the way,  
High hearts fear-stricken in the night.

Still on the uncompanioned road  
Abide, O Lord, our feet to bless :  
Thy mercy in the dark be showed  
And in the grave thy faithfulness !

## Envoi

So pass to where our baffled deeds  
    Mix with the common stuff of life,  
Where nature shapes to deeper needs  
    The issues of a hopeless strife :

Where nothing fails : the broken stroke  
    In that far region striketh home,  
The feeble word our weakness spoke  
    Is weighted with a nation's doom :

O with high courage swiftly pass!  
    There, in that wide and dark abode,  
With all I was not, all I was  
    Waits on the tardy strength of God.

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